

A Critical Discourse Analysis Stereotype and Discrimination in Green Book Movie Script

by Peter Farelly

Meli Samelia¹, Ansor Putra², Arman³
Student¹, Supervisor^{2&3}

melisamelia000@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the stereotypes and discrimination that occur in *Green Book* movie script. The source of the data in this study is the *Green Book* movie script, the movie script takes background in America 1962. The researcher found many utterances as well as actions that refer to stereotypes and discriminatory behaviour committed by white people against black people in America. This study using qualitative method because, qualitative is a procedure that produces descriptive data including written and oral words. The results of this study showed that *Green Book* movie script contains three types of discrimination and stereotypes. First, Individual Discrimination presented in an unfair treatment by whites against the main black character, Don Shirley. Second, Institutional Discrimination happened in the police institution where the police imprison Don Shirley who did not commit a crime at all, but only because he was black. Third, Structural Discrimination occurred in the form of policies carried out by majority races which have a negative impact on minority races. In the green Book movie script, structural discrimination presented in a safe travel guide for black people in southern America, the book also contains such as restaurants, hotels, beauty salons and then medical stores that are safe for black people to visit. This book was published in 1936 to 1976 during the era of segregation in the United States. Don Shirley is done his concert tour using the *Green Book* guidebook to make the trip safe because at that time the places in America were still not accessible to black people. As the final result of this research, the researcher found the dominant type of discrimination in *Green Book* movie script is Individual Discrimination.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis, Stereotype, Discrimination, Green Book Movie Script

INTRODUCTION

Language is human's tool to communicate their thoughts and ideas. Language is a primary part of human that no human can survive the world without knowing any language. Language written, verbal, and symbolic forms are used by humans to live their life as social creature because every human needs a mutual interaction every day a system of speech and written symbols that is used to communicate in the society. Language has an important role in society because there will be no interaction between people if they do not use language in their life. According to the explanation above, the main function of language is as a communication tool for people. The area of language and society is intended to show how language is influenced by such factors as class, gender, race, etc.

In communicating with each other, people sometimes say a statement which offends someone else unconsciously where the words related to racism. For example, people often say "why are you getting black now?" this sentence is not just a common argument, but it has an implicit meaning, which leads to racism. The statement proves that the people ask why his friend's skin turned black, despite of we don't need to debate, the question raises just because in our point of view that the black people is ugly and not interesting.

Racism is a serious issue that used to exist until now. Racism debilitates certain people or communities by weakening them and reducing the value of their identity. This situation will destroy the unity of society and creates divisions in society. This is not parallel with democratic principles of equality and all of human rights to be treated fairly. The situation happens because of the lack of public understanding to the issue of racism, even though racism still occurs in educated societies just because the issues of racism is often uploaded by mass media and make the public be misunderstanding of it. Fiske (1994) says racist discourse is in the media consists of a list of words, images and texts that threaded together, produce an understanding of the world and position and status of people of color in that world. Changing nature is the most complex aspect in racist. The racist behaviour can see by insulting, harrasing each other in the school, workplace or in public, doing racial graffiti, and similar aggressive anti-social acts. However, the beliefs and behaviours of social deviants are not limited in individual racism. Racism can be seen by how people act each other by their behaviour and talk. For example mocking, saying bad thing to other people, threatening or the other else by using their utterances.

Racism exists from stereotypes, because all of the different treatments doing by the people to each other are caused by misperception of one another. Stereotypes are judgments based on perceptions of someone seen from where a person's group is. Stereotypes are perceptions that are rarely proven to be factual. There are positive and negative stereotypes but mostly stereotypes are negative. For example of positive stereotype of women are merciful, graceful, and motherly. While the negative stereotypes of women are stupid, weak, and uncultured. The impact of stereotypes is the people cannot distinguish between the characters of the members in a group and the group itself. In the rest of the world the people have various cultures and traditions, the negative of stereotype can trigger social conflict in society.

Stereotype is a form of assessment that has given by others to someone based on their physical and non-physical conditions. The most of people judge a person based only on his physical form. Stereotype in the form of prejudice has a very close relationship with discriminatory behavior. Stereotype is the root of discrimination that is because the judgments that produce these stereotypes are not based on strong reasons. Thus, people who accept these stereotypes feel discriminated by groups that provide them.

Discrimination is an unfair treatment or differentiates someone or particular group based on their characteristics such as physical, ability to think, ethnicity, race, sex, religion/beliefs and etc. The consequence of discrimination would be to hurt others, and it can cause dissension in society. Swim (in Baron & Byrne, 1997) states that discrimination is a negative action against people who are objects of prejudice such as racial, ethnic and religious. It can be said that discrimination is prejudice in actions. It is prejudice when considering negroes as a stupid human being yet forbidding them to work or go to a particular institution because they are colored is discrimination. Regarding women as the weak is prejudice yet preventing them from becoming leaders is discrimination.

The object of this research is Green Book movie script written by Nick Vallelonga an American white man. He is an actor, screenwriter, and also producer of Green Book movie. The movie is about a biography of the America comedy drama and it based on true story and it was directed by Peter Farelly. The movie won many trophies in the 2019 Oscar event. The movie script tells about a world-class black pianist Dr. Don Shirley (played by Mahershala Ali) with his white Italian American driver named Tony Lip (played by Viggo Mortensen). Tony was hired for two months on a concert tour from Manhattan to the Deep South, on the way they had to rely on the "Green Book" to guide them to some safe places at the time for African-Americans.

In this movie script, there are many discriminatory treatments experienced by Dr. Don Shirley as the main character of this movie. Dr. Don Shirley is a famous black pianist but he often gets unfair treatment from white people in America. For example When Don Shirley attends a concert in the Raleigh district at North Carolina area. After he finished playing the piano, he then goes out to pee and ask the waiter "where is the toilet?" The waiter replied "it's over there" while pointing to a dirty toilet under a large tree outside the building. Dr. Don Shirley was not allowed to use the toilet in the building because he is black. This is one example of discrimination committed by white people against black people in Green Book movie. Even though Dr. Don Shirley is a well-known pianist but he still gets unfair treatment from white people in America because of his skin color.

The reason why researcher chose the topic because the researcher wanted to explore further the used of stereotypes and discrimination in the context of racism that had not been revealed by previous researchers that contained in the Green Book movie script. The researcher chose the Green Book movie script because the researcher found many utterances of stereotypes and discriminatory behavior committed by white people against black people in America.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The type of this research was qualitative research. Qualitative research is research that involves analyzing and interpreting text and interviews in order to discover meaningful patterns descriptive of a particular phenomenon (Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003:3).

The researcher used qualitative research because, the qualitative research is a research procedure which is result in descriptive data including written and oral words. This method was intended to describe the stereotypes and discriminations in Green Book movie script.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Finding

1. Stereotypes

Lippmann (1922) introduced the term 'stereotype' refers to the typical picture that comes to our mind when thinking about a particular social group.

Stereotype of White people to African American

JOHNNY	: Come on, Roger! Hit one out!
RUDY	: Be quiet, you're gonna jinx it!
LIP	: Johnny, think you can yell a little louder?
JOHNNY	: Maris is up...
LIP	: Yeah, so am I now. What the hell are you guys doing here?
JOHNNY	: Figured we'd come up and keep Dolores company...
ANTHONY	: (in Italian) You shouldn't be sleeping in the middle of the day, leaving my daughter here alone with these sacks of coal.
NICOLA	: (in Italian) And why do y hire them to do an Italian' job? It's a disgrace.
LIP	: (in Italian) I don't know who they're gonna send.

At that time Tony Lip wakes up because the sound of his family namely Johnny is very noisy because he shout at Roger's name while watching the competition. Roger Maris is white man who is a professional baseball player and he is famous because he made the best record by making 61 home runs from 1961 to 1998. The situation is not like usual, Tony's big family gathered that morning because they wanted to accompany Dolores (Tony's wife) who was cooking in the kitchen. That morning a water tap in their house is broken so Dolores called a repairman to fix it. However, the repairmen are two black men. Tony's family accompanied Dolores for fear that the black repairman would hurt Dolores.

In their conversation, Dolores' father blurted out the sentence **“You shouldn't be sleeping in the middle of the day, leaving my daughter here alone with these sacks of coal”** The sentence has implicit meaning in the phrase “sacks of coal”. It refers to those black people, it

is kind a stereotype of white people to the black people which means that these two black people are dangerous. He told Tony not to sleep when his wife was alone in the kitchen with the two blacks.

The incident above shows Tony's big family where they are white Italian people who stereotype that black people are criminals, they are bad people. They are afraid that the repairman will hurt Dolores. Therefore they all gather at Tony's house to protect Dolores. However, in fact the repairman only came to repair the water tap without hurting Dolores.

2. Discrimination

Discrimination is a critical term in understanding problems associated with diversity. Historically, of course, discrimination has been a major cause of the *lack* of diversity in higher education and the rest of society. In the 1990s, race and gender discrimination still permeate the institutions and structure of the United States.

Pincus classifies three different levels of discrimination they are individual, institutional, and structural.

• Individual Discrimination

Pincus states that individual discrimination refers to the behavior of individual members of one race/ethnic/gender group that is intended to have a differential and/or harmful effect on the members of another race/ethnic/gender group. In Green Book movie the researcher find there are a lot scene and utterances that contains Individual Discrimination doing by white people against black people.

LIP (O.S.) : Get your hands off him!
REDNECK #1 : What the good goddamn we got here, fellas?
LIP : Hand him over, we walk out, won't be a problem.
REDNECK #1 : Already is a problem, Mister.
DR. SHIRLEY : (slurring) I just came in for a drink.
REDNECK #1 : You come in here for a drink? Then you must be tired of livin', boy.
LIP : I told you, hand him over, we'll leave.
REDNECK #2 : He ain't going nowhere, we need this brillo pad to wash them dishes with...
LIP : Hey, do yourself a favor and let him go. Now.
REDNECK #1 : Say it nice.
LIP : I just said it nice.
REDNECK #1 : This boy's gonna get what's coming to him, and you ain't got no say!
LIP : Maybe. But, whatever happens, I'm gonna put a bullet right in the middle of that thick skull of yours.
REDNECK #2 : He ain't got no gun, Ray. Let's get him. He's fulla shit.
REDNECK #3 : What if he ain't?
MAN'S VOICE : Well, I sure ain't.
BARKEEP : And I won't be having none of this come to pass in my place. Let the spook go. I want these Yanks off my property.

The conversation above starts from Tony who is resting at the inn then surprised by George who comes to knock on his room at midnight. George comes to tell Tony if Don Shirley is in trouble. They both immediately went looking for Don Shirley and found him in a bar. The situation happened start from Don Shirley who goes to the bar at Louisiana, Kentucky in America to drink but inside the bar there are many white people who are also drinking. However, in the bar there are many white people who don't like Don Shirley entering the bar because he is black people. They commits act of discrimination with beating Don Shirley until his face was bruised.

In few minute later Tony and George arrive in the bar they found Don Shirley had been beaten to a pulp. To save Don Shirley, Tony negotiates with them to release Don Shirley. But they didn't want to let go and then one of them said He wasn't going anywhere. He ain't going nowhere, we need this brillo pad to wash them dishes with this sentence refers to discrimination, white people treat Don Shirley unfairly just because of the color of his skin, they denigrate Don Shirley because they think Don Shirley does not deserve to be in their environment.

The incident was an act of discrimination committed by white people against black people in America. The scene above shows how discrimination was carried out by white people who beat and insulted Don Shirley in the bar just because he was black. This incident was categorized as institutional discrimination because the action was carried out by the majority racial group, namely the white people who were beating Don Shirley, namely the racial minority or black people.

- **Institutional Discrimination**

Institutional discrimination, on the other hand, is quite different because it refers to the policies of the dominant race/ethnic/gender institutions and the behavior of individuals who control these institutions and implement policies that are intended to have a differential and/or harmful effect on minority race/ethnic/gender groups. Institutional discrimination is usually carried out by the dominant group against minority groups because it is the dominant group, by definition that generally controls the social institutions.

LIP : Your mother's ass... 'Hell's this guy doin'?

PATROLMAN #1 : License and papers?

LIP : Glad to see you guys. I'm a little lost.

PATROLMAN #1 : (to Lip) Step out of the car.

LIP : In the rain? What I do?

PATROLMAN #1 : Out of the car. Why you on this road?

LIP : I told you, I had to detour and I'm lost. We're not from around here.

PATROLMAN #1 : No, you ain't. So I'm gonna ask you again... what the hell you doin' out here? (glances at Shirley) And why you driving him?

LIP : He's my boss.

PATROLMAN #1 : He can't be out here at night. This is a sundown town.

LIP : What's that mean?

PATROLMAN #1 : (to Patrolman #2) Get him out of the car. Check his I.D.
 LIP : Come on, it's pouring.
 PATROLMAN #2 : I can just get it through the window.
 PATROLMAN #1 : Get him out the goddamn car!
 PATROLMAN #2 : Out. (to DR SHIRLEY)
 PATROLMAN #1 : What's this last name say?
 LIP : Vallelonga.
 PATROLMAN #1 : 'Hell kind of name is that?
 LIP : Italian.
 PATROLMAN #1 : Oh, now I get it. That's why you driving this boy around... you half a nigger yourself.
 POLICEMAN #2 : (shaking) Hands in the air, now!
 DR. SHIRLEY : Excuse me! (no response) Excuse me, sirs. I quite understand why my associate is being held, but what exactly am I being charged with? (CONT'D) You seem like reasonable men--can you let me out so we might discuss the situation please?
 PATROLMAN #1 : Put the apple butter away, boy--you ain't goin' nowhere no time soon.
 DR. SHIRLEY : You cannot hold me without cause!
 PATROLMAN #1 : I got cause. 'Cause you let the sun set on your black ass!

The conversation above is when Don Shirley and Tony are continuing the concert tour at night, but at that time there was a swiping conducted by two patrolmans. Their car was stopped to check the completeness of the vehicle documents. In the middle of the examination the PATROLMAN #1 asked Tony He can't be out here at night. This is a sundown town. As a result of beatings committed by Tony on the police who did not accept because the police insulted Tony as half Negro. The police immediately arrested the two of them and put them in jail that night. Don Shirley who did not accept this pleaded with the police to be released because he would hold a concert the following day. At that time Don Shirley asked why he was also arrested because in fact only Tony made a mistake. However, the policeman replied I got cause. 'Cause you let the sun set on your black ass! The meaning of black ass refers to black people, so the reason why Don Shirley is arrested because he is black.

The first sentence brought up by the police "He can't be out here at night. This is a sundown town ". refers to discriminatory behavior where in the city they treat black people improperly. There is a difference in treatment between white people and black people. This shows the severity of racial discrimination in America. There are many places that forbid the presence of black people.

Furthermore, the discriminatory act carried out by the police was by taking Don Shirley into prison without any mistakes he made, he was arrested only because he was an African

American people. These acts of discrimination are included in the type of Institutional discrimination because they are carried out within a police institution.

- **Structural Discrimination**



Tony Lip is reading Green Book (00:56:46).

The picture above is Tony Lip reading the Green Book to see a better route for the next tour. Green Book or the Negro Travelers is a black travel guide book created in 1892 to 1960 by Victor Hugo Green, he is a black postman from New York. This book was published in 1936 to 1976 during the era of segregation in the United States. Green Book is not only a travel guide book but also in this book there is a list of various businesses such as restaurants, hotels, beauty salons and then medicine stores that are needed for comfort while traveling in the United States for black people.

One night Tony was reading the Green Book so he knew a safe and passable route to continue their journey the next day so that he would not get into obstacles for South America. This must be done because in the 1960s there were still many areas that could not be traversed by black people. It is due to there were Jim Crow's Law do segregation between White and Black People. This segregation includes school, parks area, and public residential. Further, in this era discrimination against black people very hard, white Americans treated them harshly and improperly because the presence of black people was not allowed.

2. Discussion

Based on finding above, the researcher analyzes movie script of Green Book movie by using stereotype and discrimination theory. After analyzing, the researchers find out fourteen data. There are four data as a stereotype, the rest are discrimination. Back then, people have the always negative stereotype about black people. They stereotyped as a villain, committing a criminal, cruel, and so on. It related to the history, in which black people come first in South America to be human trafficking. It occurs from 1607 to 1807. Then, they become the slave. Therefore, white people considered they are not the same as black people. They think black people just the slave that does not deserve to live with them.

However, it is different now. Since Marthin Luther King Jr. in 1960 as leader of civil right movement that emerges on the public. After this movement, it changes stereotype of black people. Then, they gain equality treatment and the better life than back then. It could be seen from American media that show many black people as an athlete, a singer and a good dancer.

They are also warmhearted and nice characters. In this movie script of Green book, the character is a black people that have both negative and positive stereotypes. He is Dr. Don Shirley, a black pianist. He concerts tour around South America along with his driver, Tony Lip.

On other hand, the researcher finds out data about discrimination by using Pincus theory. He divides the discrimination theory into three types; Individual Discrimination; Institutional Discrimination; and Structural Discrimination. Those types are included in this movie script. Black people have always become a victim of white people even they have obtained equality treatment in law.

From the analysis above, the most dominant types of discrimination in the movies script of Green Book movie is individual discrimination. It is an action committed by a person or even a group toward others. The researcher finds out seven data about this discrimination type.

CONCLUSION

The Green Book movie script can be analyzed by using stereotype and discrimination theory due to the movie is about cross racial friendship. From the three types of discrimination that are state by Pincus, in Green Book movie script the researcher find out the dominant type is Individual discrimination. It can be seen in this film there are many acts of individual discrimination in which black people are often become a victim.

Black people always stereotyped negatively because at history the first time they came to America as slaves traded. In this film Director Peter Farelly describes how stereotypes and discrimination happened to black people in the 1960s. This film takes place in 1962, where the African American stereotype that year has improved from before. Because, that year was the culmination of black resistance by the emergence of the Human Rights Movement.

Stereotype of black people in the 1960s included music, a great athlete, like fried chicken, genius and so on. This stereotype matches what is played by the main character Don Shirley as a black genius who is also good at playing the piano. Stereotype in 1960s is different from the stereotypes of African Americans in before 20th centuries, they are stereotyped negatively such as, criminal, stupid, wicked, lazy, poor, uncivilized and others.

Nowdays discrimination between white people and black people in America still exists but, is no longer as severe as before. Black people get better treatment than before. This is proven when Barack Obama become the first president as black people in America. Then recently the news that is viral as well as encouraging was the election of Zozibini Tunzi as Miss Universe 2019. She was a black woman from South Africa.

REFERENCES

Fiske, J. 1994. *Media matters: everyday culture and political change*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Jones, James M. 1972. *Prejudice and Racism*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies Publications.

Lippmann, Walter. 1922. *Public Opinion : Stereotypes*. New York : Macmillan

Lippmann, Walter. 1922. *Public Opinion : Stereotypes*. New York : Macmillan

Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1923. *The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages*. pp. 296-336.

Pincus, Fred.L. 1996. *Discrimination Comes in Many Forms: Individual, Institutional, and Structural: The American Behavioral Scientist*. Sage Publications, Inc. Vol. 40 No. 2.

Swim (in Baron, R. A. & Byrne, D. 1997). *Social Psychology: 8th edition*. Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon.